

Wabash River Heritage Corridor Commission
Meeting Minutes – January 3, 2001
Indianapolis/Marion County Library Services Center, Room 226B

Members present:

Adams – Steve Krull
Allen - Ron James
Cass - Janet Fawley
Fountain - Jim Starling
Gibson - David A. Knowles
Huntington - Dwight Ericsson, Mike Mettler alt
Miami - Ken Einselen
Parke - John Isaacs
Tippecanoe - Norman "Lucky" Neiburger
Sullivan – John Gettinger
Vermillion – Mary Clingan
Vigo - Keith Ruble
Wabash – C. Robert Elrod
DNR – Steve Morris
DNR Historic Preservation & Archeology – Jon Smith
DOC Tourism - Marianna Weinzapfel

Proxies

Posey - ?
Warren – Lucky Neiburger

Counties not represented:

Carroll
Jay
Knox
Wells

Dept. of Natural Resources staff present:

Emily Bartley - DNR Outdoor Recreation
Bob Bronson - DNR Outdoor Recreation

Visitors present:

Mercedes Brugh – Little Turtle Waterway
Bernie Dahl - Banks of the Wabash
Don Morrison – Ecologistics Limited
Rory Robinson - National Park Service
Eleanor Starling

CALL TO ORDER

President Norman Neiburger called the meeting to order at 1:00 PM.

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF NOVEMBER 1ST, 2000 MEETING MINUTES

Jan Fawley had suggested revisiting the "Action Plan". Mary Clingan should have been listed as the representative from Vermillion Co. at the last meeting not Larry Hicks. Robert Elrod motioned to approve minutes as corrected, and Ken Einselen seconded. Motion carried.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Lucky Neiburger reported that he had a 1 hour and 30 minute meeting with Eric Gonzalez and Mike Landwer. They are Representative Patrick Bauer's assistants. Representative Bauer is on the House Ways and Means Committee. They informed him that the governor first proposes the budget and that he should speak with Mike Gery in the governor's office. He said the state budget surplus has decreased to 1 billion dollars, which means that it will be challenging to get the new WRHCC budget passed. Lucky stated that the commission needs to pick a day to lobby legislators because it is important to meet personally with them, along with the contacts already initiated.

OFFICER ELECTIONS

Janet Fawley nominated Lucky Neiburger as president and Ron James as vice president on behalf of the nominating committee. Motion carried.

COMMISSION FINANCIAL REPORT

Steve Morris presented the financial report. Out of the \$10,000 appropriated by the 1997 legislature, there is \$272.11 remaining. The current average cost per meeting is \$600.00 for postage, travel expenses, etc. At this rate the commission will run out of money soon. Steve told the commission to continue to turn in travel vouchers. However, the vouchers might not be paid until July, when new money is appropriated.

BANKS OF THE WABASH REPORT

Bernie Dahl mentioned the Banks of the Wabash has an annual meeting in Shadeland scheduled for April 18, 2001. All WRHCC members and other interested parties are encouraged to attend. Bernie will send out more information at the end of January. They are arranging to have legislators speak at one of the sessions.

OLD BUSINESS

Interpretive Brochure

The brochures are in the last stages of being paid for. It should be finalized before the next meeting.

Steve Morris announced that all state welcome centers and most rest areas had received another box of brochures. Steve reported seeing the brochure at a rest area on I65. Ron James commented that he has not seen any brochures at the rest areas he has checked along Interstate 69. Steve said he would call the appropriate distribution office to see why the brochures are not on display.

Legislative Briefing Packet

Dwight Ericsson passed out the legislative briefing packet he prepared. On page two the last figure of the first paragraph should be about \$1.5 million not \$3 million. Also on the fourth paragraph should read, "...and by assisting the DNR Grants Staff in awarding \$7.946 million in Corridor Grant Funds for projects totaling over \$12.7 million." Commission members should read and study the packet before lobbying the legislature.

Mercedes Brugh set the lobbying day on Wednesday, January 10, 2001 at 10am. Mercedes also requested information on the fastest way of contacting commission members if plans change suddenly.

Rory Robinson suggested that commission members gather a wish list of projects from their counties to present to the legislators.

Position description for proposed staff – Ron James is going to turn in a typed position description to Steve Morris to be distributed with the next meeting's agenda. Be prepared to discuss the description at the March 7th meeting.

Website – A suggestion was made to include a list of past grant awards by county on the website. The list should include project year, description, and total cost.

Newsletter - Dale Brier needs more articles and photos for the newsletter. Steve Morris suggested including the list of 2000 WRHC grant awards in the newsletter.

NEW BUSINESS

Suggestions for Future Speakers

John Gettinger suggested as a speaker the organizer of a float trip down the Wabash River for Sullivan County eight graders. She is developing a lesson plan to accompany the trip.

Letters Sent – Lucky sent a letter to Eric Gonzales and Mike Landwer requesting a meeting to discuss legislative funding. The summary of that meeting is listed under the President's report.

Steve Morris sent out a copy of Gretchen Gutman's PowerPoint presentation on the State of Indiana's Budget Process to each member that was present at the last meeting.

Letters Received – Proxies from Jack Harmon and Nancy Grenard

A letter from the Vermillion County Commissioner stating that Mary Clingan is now that county's representative and Larry Hicks is the alternate.

A letter from Huntington County Commissioners stating that Mike Mettler is the alternate for that county.

A notice from Ted Andrews, transportation engineer, about the Rangeline Road Bridge in Huntington Co. There was to be a meeting about the dismantling of the bridge on Wednesday, December 13 at 1pm in the GAR room in the Huntington County Courthouse, but it was rescheduled until Monday, January 22.

NiSource sent in information on an Environmental Challenge Fund. The deadline for applications is February 1st. More information and applications can be obtained from their website at <http://www.nisource.com> or call (219)647-5253.

IDEM sent in information on the Nonpoint Source 319 Grant that is now available. Up to \$300,000 can be requested. Proposals are due by March 31. For more information go to the website <http://www.state.in.us/idem/own> or call (317)233-8491.

Other New Business

The Historic Preservation Fund (HPF) Program applications are now available. They are due February 16th. Contact DNR – Division of Historic Preservation for more information at (317)232-1646.

The Recreational Trails Program (RTP) Grant applications will be available on February 1st and are due back by May 1st. It is an 80/20% match program and offers anywhere between \$10,000 and \$150,000. Contact the DNR – Division of Outdoor Recreation for more information at (317)232-4070.

Land & Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) applications will be available on March 1st and are due back by June 1st. It is a 50/50% match program and offers anywhere between \$10,000 and \$200,000. Contact the DNR – Division of Outdoor Recreation for more information at (317)232-4070

(New Business Continued)

Steve Morris recognized Dwight Ericsson as outgoing Vice President and commission members applauded him for his efforts.

Jim Starling moved to change the July meeting to the 11th since the first Wednesday falls on the July 4th holiday. Ken Einselen seconded. Motion passed.

The May meeting will be held at France Park in Cass Co. organized by Janet Fawley.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Indiana Trails and Greenway Conference will be held in Indianapolis February 25-27, 2001. For more information, visit the conference website at www.indygreenways.org/conference.

NEXT MEETING

Wednesday, March 7th, 2001 at the Indianapolis/Marion County Main Library in Indianapolis

ADJOURNMENT

Motioned by Ron James. Seconded by John Isaacs. Passed.